



**The Secretary of Energy**  
Washington, D.C. 20585

February 1, 2008

The Honorable Byron L. Dorgan  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Dorgan:

Thank you for your letter regarding petroleum supply constraints affecting North Dakota. I agree with you that the Department has capabilities that could be of possible assistance to your State in providing additional information on the petroleum supply situation and, in so doing, perhaps mitigating the effects of a shortage situation in the future.

The Department currently plans to undertake activities on two coordinated fronts, as discussed recently with your staff. First, the Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability is developing a form to collect information on unplanned refinery outages, analogous to a current form which collects information on major electricity outages and incidents experienced by electric power companies. The completed form would provide the Department with the basic information necessary to alert it to the existence and severity of a problem and would provide contact information should it be necessary for the Department to discuss and address the issue. This initiative would invite public participation through issuance of a Federal Register Notice requesting comments on the proposed form.

Second, the Energy Information Administration (EIA) will conduct a semi-annual analysis of planned refinery outages and their potential impacts on petroleum markets, using commercially available data sources. EIA also plans to issue a Federal Register Notice soliciting comment on having EIA collect its own data on planned outages. The comments submitted in response to this notice will enable EIA to gather information on what data might be provided to supplement the available commercial data sources on planned outages. A copy of this notice will be provided to your staff as soon as it is issued. EIA will share the information gained in this process with your staff before proceeding with subsequent actions.

We trust that these actions, once implemented, will assist your State and others in preparing for and responding to unexpected and unusual developments in the petroleum market. If you have further questions, please call me or Ms. Lisa E. Epifani, Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs, at (202) 586-5450.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sam", is positioned above the name Samuel W. Bodman.

Samuel W. Bodman

